

REMARKS

This Amendment is being filed in response to the Office Action dated March 16, 2000. Reconsideration and allowance of the application in view of the amendments made above and the remarks to follow are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 are pending in this application of which Claim 1 is the sole independent claim. Claims 5-7 are added by this amendment of which Claim 5 is an independent claim. Claim 3 is cancelled herein, without prejudice.

In the Office Action, Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,734,171 to Witte ("Witte"). Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,578,852 to Aldridge ("Aldridge") in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,794,416 to Johnston ("Johnston"). Claims 3 and 4 are indicated as containing allowable subject matter if written in independent form including all the limitations of the base and intervening claims.

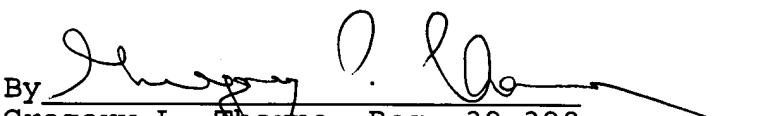
In accordance with the Examiner's suggestion, Claim 1 is amended herein to include the indicated allowable elements of Claim 3. Claim 4 is amended to properly reflect dependence on amended Claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully suggested that Claim 1, and Claims 2 and 4 that depend therefrom are allowable over the cited prior art and an indication to that effect is respectfully requested.

New Claims 5-7 are method claims that contain the same subject matter as indicated allowable and an indication to that effect is respectfully requested.

Applicant has made a diligent and sincere effort to place this application in condition for immediate allowance and notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Early and favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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June 16, 2000

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

It is hereby certified that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to:

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